



**THE SCHOOL DISTRICT OF  
PALM BEACH COUNTY, FL**

**RESEARCH, EVALUATION, & ASSESSMENT**

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## **RESERCH STUDY: FY24 DISTRICT HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES COLLEGE MATRICULATION SUMMARY**

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April 11, 2025

The District has received the FY24 high school graduates' college matriculation data from the National Student Clearinghouse (NSC).<sup>1</sup> The Department of Research, Evaluation, & Assessment (DREA) has performed a preliminary analysis of college enrollment for students who graduated from the District between FY20 and FY24<sup>2</sup>, persistence rates<sup>3</sup> for students who graduated from the District between FY19 and FY23, and degree completion for students who graduated between FY17 and FY20.

This document provides an analysis of college enrollment, including the District graduates' college enrollment by year, institution type, and student demographics. To gain an understanding of middle and high school student achievement impact on college enrollment, the relationships with grade 8 Florida Standards Assessment (FSA) achievement and high school SAT scores are also examined. The report also details enrollment, persistence, and completion rates at the most popular postsecondary institutions for the District's high school graduates.

### **SUMMARY OF FINDINGS**

#### **General Enrollment Trends FY20 Through FY24**

- Fifty-eight percent of District graduates enrolled in a postsecondary institution in the fall after graduation, which is similar to FY23 (58%) and FY22 (59%) (Table 1).<sup>4</sup> These data show that college enrollment has increased since the height of the COVID-19 pandemic in FY20 (56%).
- From FY20 to FY23, the percent of District graduates attending a postsecondary institution (56% - 58%) was lower than the enrollment rates of national high school graduates in the corresponding years (61% - 63%) (Table 1).<sup>5</sup> National high school data are not yet available for FY24 graduates.

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<sup>1</sup> The summarized data as reported by the NSC and may differ from the graduate counts from the Florida Department of Education because some students request their enrollment and/or degree records to be blocked from sharing.

<sup>2</sup> Graduates is defined as end-of-year grade 12 students who earned a standard diploma (which does not include special diplomas or GEDs).

<sup>3</sup> Persistence rate is the percentage of students who return to college at any institution for their second year.

<sup>4</sup> The overall enrollment changes may be impacted by colleges and universities that have withdrawn from the NSC or some students' enrollment and/or degree records are blocked at the student's request.

<sup>5</sup> Reported by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics:  
<https://www.bls.gov/news.release/hsgsec.htm#:~:text=Recent%20High%20School%20Graduates%20and,10%20were%20full%2Dtime%20students>.

**Table 1. Number and percent of District graduates enrolled in postsecondary institutions in the fall after graduation**

Year	Number of District Graduates	Number of Graduates Enrolled in College	Percent of Graduates Enrolled in College	National High School <sup>6</sup>
FY24	13,740	7,939	58%	NA
FY23	12,898	7,539	58%	61%
FY22	12,506	7,401	59%	62%
FY21	13,126	7,419	57%	62%
FY20	13,469	7,500	56%	63%

Note: The college enrollment may be impacted by NSC Institution coverage rate for the year or students' enrollment record blocked rate.

- For each cohort from FY20 to FY23, the percentage enrolled in the first year increased by 3 - 5 percentage points relative to the fall, with small additional increases in the second and third years (Table 2).

**Table 2. Percent of District graduates enrolled in postsecondary institutions for the first time in the fall and for the first time in the following four years<sup>7,8</sup>**

Year	Percent Enrolled in Fall	Percent Enrolled by the end of First Year	Percent Enrolled in the Second Year	Percent Enrolled in the Third Year	Percent Enrolled in the Fourth Year	Total Percent*
FY24	58%	NA	NA	NA	NA	58%
FY23	58%	65%	3%	NA	NA	67%
FY22	59%	66%	4%	1%	NA	71%
FY21	57%	62%	5%	2%	1%	69%
FY20	56%	62%	5%	2%	1%	70%

Note: NA indicates no data available. \* Total percent may appear to be different due to rounding.

- For FY24 graduates' enrollment in college was similar to that of FY23 cohort. Enrollment rates at public university (Table 3), in-state (Table 4), a four-year college or university (Table 5) were increased relative to the pandemic years of FY20 and FY21.

<sup>6</sup> "National School" refers to national high school graduates between age 16 to 24 as reported by the U.S. Department of Labor.

<sup>7</sup> Graduates are defined as Grade 12 students who earned a standard diploma (which does not include special diplomas or GEDs). College enrollment does not include students who joined the military after graduation.

<sup>8</sup> Fall is defined as anytime during the calendar year of graduation (e.g., May to December); the first year is the graduated year's May to next year July; the second year is August to next July, etc.

**Table 3. Number and percent of District graduates enrolled in public and private institutions in the fall after graduation**

Year	Number of District Graduates	Number Enrolled in a Public College	Percent Enrolled in a Public College	Number Enrolled in a Private College	Percent Enrolled in a Private College
FY24	13,740	7205	52%	734	5%
FY23	12,898	6709	52%	830	6%
FY22	12,506	6,633	53%	768	6%
FY21	13,126	6,570	50%	849	6%
FY20	13,469	6,578	49%	922	7%

**Table 4. Number and percent of District graduates enrolled in an in-state and out-of-state postsecondary institution in the fall after graduation**

Year	Number of District Graduates	Number Enrolled in an In-State College	Percent Enrolled in an In-State College	Number Enrolled in an Out-of-State College	Percent Enrolled in an Out-of-State College
FY24	13,740	7,167	52%	772	6%
FY23	12,898	6,706	52%	833	6%
FY22	12,506	6,584	53%	817	7%
FY21	13,126	6,605	50%	814	6%
FY20	13,469	6,694	50%	806	6%

**Table 5. Number and percent of District graduates enrolled in two and four-year postsecondary institutions in the fall after graduation<sup>9</sup>**

Year	Number of District Graduates	Number Enrolled in a Two-Year College	Percent Enrolled in a Two-Year College	Number Enrolled in a Four-Year College	Percent Enrolled in a Four-Year College
FY24	13,740	283	2%	7,656	56%
FY23	12,898	257	2%	7,282	56%
FY22	12,506	239	2%	7,162	57%
FY21	13,126	242	2%	7,177	55%
FY20	13,469	237	2%	7,263	54%

#### **Enrollment by Student Demographics**

- A gap between Female (64%) and Male (51%) enrollment among the FY24 cohort continued the historical trend (Table 6). Both Female and Male college enrollment are similar from FY23 (1 percent decreased for male). Both the enrollment rates are slightly higher than the FY20 cohort (1 percent increased for female, 2 percent increased for male).

<sup>9</sup> The NSC has classified Palm Beach State College (formerly Palm Beach Community College) as a four-year institution for all years in this analysis.

- Fewer Black (46% - 55%) and Hispanic (48% - 51%) graduates were enrolled in a postsecondary institution than White graduates (68% - 70%) (Table 6). For Black students, the enrollment slightly decreased from FY23 (54%) to FY24 (52%), while enrollment for Hispanic and White students was similar FY23 and FY24 (49% in FY23 to 50% in FY24 for Hispanic students; 70% in FY23 to 69% in FY24 for White students). Correspondingly, the enrollment gap between White and Black students decreased from 23% in FY20 to 17% in FY24, and the White-Hispanic gap similarly narrowed from 21% to 19%. These changes indicate a positive trend in college enrollment recovery since the pandemic.
- In FY24, FRL and ELL graduate enrollment rates exceeded FY20 (the pandemic year) and were similar to FY23, while ESE enrollment increased by 2 percentage points, from 36% in FY23 to 38% in FY24.

**Table 6. Number of graduates and percent enrolled in postsecondary institutions in the fall after graduation by demographic groups**

Group	FY24		FY23		FY22		FY21		FY20	
	Count	Pct	Count	Pct	Count	Pct	Count	Pct	Count	Pct
ALL	13,740	58%	12,898	58%	12,506	59%	13,126	57%	13,469	56%
FRL	8091	49%	7,300	49%	7,127	50%	8,203	48%	7,625	45%
ESE	2010	38%	1,828	36%	1,694	37%	1,642	34%	1,562	35%
ELL	1456	34%	1,182	35%	1,076	40%	1,307	33%	1,515	28%
Female	6963	64%	6,587	64%	6,430	65%	6,663	63%	6,880	63%
Male	6777	51%	6,311	52%	6,076	53%	6,463	50%	6,589	49%
Black	3623	52%	3,463	54%	3,235	55%	3,528	49%	3,697	46%
Hispanic	4978	50%	4,407	49%	4,120	51%	4,310	48%	4,338	48%
White	4244	69%	4,173	70%	4,324	68%	4,308	69%	4,529	69%

### College Choice

For all years, Palm Beach State College (PBSC) has been the most common college choice for District graduates (Table 7). Enrollment at PBSC has increased by 1 percentage point to 24% relative to the FY23 enrollment of 23%.

**Table 7. Number and percent enrolled in the five most frequently attended colleges/ universities in the fall after graduation**

Institution	FY24		FY23		FY22		FY21		FY20	
	Count	Pct	Count	Pct	Count	Pct	Count	Pct	Count	Pct
Palm Beach State College	3288	24%	2,938	23%	2,932	23%	2,739	21%	2,895	21%
Florida Atlantic University	835	6%	854	7%	843	7%	882	7%	907	7%
University of Central Florida	615	4%	615	5%	557	4%	502	4%	644	5%
University of Florida	546	4%	554	4%	514	4%	545	4%	555	4%
Florida State University	334	2%	330	3%	354	3%	510	4%	341	3%

### Student Achievement and College Enrollment

- For FY24, enrollment for students with lower SAT reading scores (below 400 on SAT) decreased about 2 points from FY23 (decreasing from FY23's 29% to FY24's 27%), while 2 percentage points increase were registered for SAT math 400-499 (increasing from FY23's 51% to FY24's 53%) and 600-800 score (increasing from FY23's 88% to FY24's 90%). Other groups' performance remained similar to FY23 and FY22.

**Table 8. Number of District graduates and percent enrolled in postsecondary institutions in the fall after graduation by SAT Reading score**

Score Range	FY24		FY23		FY22		FY21		FY20	
	Count	Pct	Count	Pct	Count	Pct	Count	Pct	Count	Pct
1 - 399	1,422	27%	901	29%	796	31%	1,032	22%	854	18%
400 - 499	4,439	45%	4,545	44%	4,176	49%	4,638	44%	4,726	40%
500 - 599	3,899	70%	3,828	69%	3,677	69%	3,681	69%	3,955	68%
600 - 800	2,990	87%	2,870	87%	2,695	83%	2,799	85%	3,024	84%

**Table 9. Number of District graduates and percent enrolled in postsecondary institutions in the fall after graduation by SAT Math score**

Score Range	FY24		FY23		FY22		FY21		FY20	
	Count	Pct	Count	Pct	Count	Pct	Count	Pct	Count	Pct
1 - 399	3,241	36%	2,603	35%	2,138	39%	2,522	32%	2,501	29%
400 - 499	4,007	53%	4,038	51%	3,892	54%	4,139	50%	4,147	48%
500 - 599	3,430	74%	3,444	75%	3,376	74%	3,484	73%	3,737	72%
600 - 800	2,072	90%	2,059	88%	1,938	86%	2,004	87%	2,174	86%

- Table 10 demonstrates a correlation between 8th-grade (7th-grade for FY24) Florida Standards Assessment (FSA) English Language Arts (ELA) <sup>10</sup> scores and postsecondary enrollment. Graduates achieving Level 4 or 5 had the highest enrollment rates (71%-86%), while those scoring Level 1 had the lowest (29%-35%). Graduates at Level 2 enrolled at rates of 47%-50%. Notably, FY24 graduates with a Level 1 ELA score in 7th grade showed a 2% increase in college enrollment compared to FY23 (31% to 33%).
- Similarly, Table 11 shows a comparable trend for 8th-grade (7th-grade for FY24) FSA Math scores. Graduates scoring Level 4 or 5 had college enrollment rates of 70%-85%, Level 1 graduates enrolled at 30%-38%, and Level 2 graduates at 43%-47%.
- Overall, FY24 graduates showed college enrollment rates that were similar to or slightly higher than FY23 across all achievement levels.

**Table 10. Number of District graduates and percent enrolled in postsecondary institutions in the fall after graduation by Grade 8 state assessment FSA ELA Level**

Score Range	FY24		FY23		FY22		FY21		FY20	
	Count	Pct	Count	Pct	Count	Pct	Count	Pct	Count	Pct
Level 1	1,883	33%	1,606	31%	1,461	35%	1,790	31%	1,697	29%
Level 2	2,367	50%	2,002	49%	1,958	50%	2,230	49%	2,105	47%
Level 3	2,402	64%	2,795	63%	2,653	63%	2,578	62%	2,657	62%
Level 4	2,175	76%	2,365	76%	2,147	71%	2,108	73%	2,170	76%
Level 5	1,479	86%	1,450	84%	1,742	81%	1,569	82%	1,606	82%

<sup>10</sup> For FY24 graduates, 7<sup>th</sup> FSA ELA and Math's levels were used in place of the concealed 8<sup>th</sup> -grade FSA exams from FY2020.

**Table 11. Number of District graduates and percent enrolled in postsecondary institutions in the fall after graduation by Grade 8 state assessment Math Level**

Score Range	FY24*		FY23*		FY23*		FY21*		FY20*	
	Count	Pct	Count	Pct	Count	Pct	Count	Pct	Count	Pct
Level 1	1961	38%	1,536	34%	1,327	36%	1,574	32%	1,464	30%
Level 2	1622	47%	1,331	45%	1,325	49%	1,492	44%	1,533	43%
Level 3	2431	57%	2,523	56%	2,555	56%	2,614	58%	2,684	59%
Level 4	1832	71%	2,018	70%	2,047	69%	2,093	67%	2,033	70%
Level 5	2491	85%	2,880	83%	2,796	79%	2,622	80%	2,622	79%

\* Note: Since FY20, grade 8 FSA Math was not required for grade 8; the students might take Algebra EOC or Geometry EOC. The summary is based the highest performance level the students received. Also, for FY24, grade 7's highest math score level was used.

**Persistence Rate: FY19 to FY23 Cohorts**

- For FY23, the District persistence rate was 83% which is increased from FY22, FY21, FY20 and FY19.
- Across years, the persistence rate<sup>11</sup> for District graduates enrolled in college was higher than the National persistence rate (Table 12), similar to or slightly higher than National 20 (age) and under persistence, except for FY19, the District persistence rate was lower than National 20 (age) and under persistence rate.

**Table 12. First - Year persistence rate for the District high school graduates enrolled in postsecondary institutions**

Cohort Year	District Enrolled Count	District Persistence Rate	National Persistence Rate	National 20 (age) and under* Persistence Rate
FY23	7,580	83%	NA	NA
FY22	7,556	81%	77%	81%
FY21	7,533	81%	76%	80%
FY20	7,734	81%	75%	79%
FY19	8,617	77%	74%	79%

\* National Persistence Rate is from NSC <https://nscresearchcenter.org/persistence-retention/>

**Degree Completion**

- Within six years, 64% of students in the FY17 cohort and 61% of the FY18 cohort completed a certificate, BA, AA or MA and higher degree. These completion rates (64% for FY17 and 61% for FY18) were similar to or higher than the National completion rate<sup>12</sup> (62% for FY17 and 61% for FY18), as shown in Table 13.
- The Bachelor's degree was the most common highest degree completed (42% for FY17 and 41% for FY18). While 38% of FY19 cohort students have completed a Bachelor's degree, this percentage is expected to increase with time.
- For FY19 cohort, by the end of year 2024, about 52% have completed AA or BA degree (Table 13).
- In total, for the FY17 and FY18 cohorts, within six years, 6% graduates received at least one certificate or other diploma, about 45%-46% of graduates received at least one bachelor's degree, and 24% - 26% completed at least one associate degree (Table 14).

<sup>11</sup> Persistence rate is the percentage of students who return to college at any institution for their second year.

<sup>12</sup> The national degree completion calculation excludes the students who dual enrolled while in high school

<https://nscresearchcenter.org/yearly-progress-and-completion/>

**Table 13. Count FY17 to FY20 for the District high school graduates enrolled in postsecondary institutions and degree completion rate**

Cohort Year	Count	Percent for MA, BA or AA Degree or Other	Percent for Highest Degree with Other	Percent for Highest Degree with AA	Percent for Highest Degree with BA	Percent for Highest Degree with MA and Above	National Degree Completion Rate for MA, BA or AA or Certificate
FY20	7,769	51%	1%	15%	34%	1%	
FY19	8,610	57%	2%	14%	38%	2%	NA
FY18	8,456	61%	2%	13%	41%	5%	61%
FY17	8,113	64%	2%	15%	42%	4%	62%

Note: NA denotes “not available”. With any of the Degrees,

- Other - Received Certificate or other Diploma as the Highest Degree
- AA - Received Associate’s Degree as the Highest Degree
- BA - Received Bachelor’s Degree as the Highest Degree
- MA and Above - Received Master’s Degree and above as the Highest Degree
- FY17 and FY18 are six - year degree completion; other are the completion by the end of 2022

**Table 14. Count FY17 to FY20 for the District high school graduates enrolled in postsecondary institutions and all degree completion rate**

Cohort Year	Count	Percent for Competed Degree with Other	Percent for Competed Degree with AA	Percent for Competed Degree with BA	Percent for Highest Degree with MA and Above
FY20	7,769	5%	20%	35%	1%
FY19	8,610	6%	22%	41%	2%
FY18	8,456	6%	24%	45%	5%
FY17	8,113	6%	26%	46%	4%

Note: NA denotes “not available”. With any of the Degrees,

- Other - Received Certificate or other Diploma
- AA - Received Associate’s Degree
- BA - Received Bachelor’s Degree
- MA and Above - Received Master’s Degree and above
- FY17 and FY18 are six - year degree completion; other are the completion by the end of 2024

In summary the percentage of District FY24 graduates who enrolled in postsecondary institutions in the fall after graduation is similar to FY23 and slightly increased from FY20. The enrollment gaps between White and Black, and White and Hispanic students in FY24 decreased compared to FY23 and FY20. The enrollment gaps between lower and higher-achieving students in SAT or grade 8 FSA (grade 7 for FY24) in FY24 decreased compare to FY20.

The FY23 persistence rate is similar to FY22 and FY21, showing improvement from FY19. For FY19, the persistence rate for District graduates enrolled in college was higher than the National persistence rate.

FY16 and FY17 graduates who completed a degree in six years was higher than the National completion rate.

### **NEXT STEPS**

Overall, for FY24 District graduates, the postsecondary enrollment was similar to from FY23, about 2 percentage points increased from FY20 (56% for FY20) due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. This impact was also reflected for each high school. Additionally, as noted above, there are differences in enrollment and persistence rates related to the high school that students attended.

The District High School Graduates' College Matriculation [Dashboard](#) provides summaries of college enrollment, persistence rates and degree completion by District high schools.<sup>13</sup> Comparison to the District schools and National Benchmarks are also included. With this in mind and the information provided in the summary and dashboard, staff are urged to reflect on the following questions:

1. How does college enrollment compare to the prior year? The last five years? What trends do you see? How do they compare to the National Benchmarks?
2. How does college persistent rate compare to the prior year? The last five years? What trends do you see? How do they compare to the National Benchmarks?
3. How does college completion rate compare to the District overall and National Benchmarks?
4. Do high school graduates meeting college readiness benchmarks enroll in college?
5. What are we doing to monitor students beginning in grade 9 and tracking them to college enrollment?
6. How can we better support students who are impacted by COVID-19 and help them to prepare for enrollment, persistence, and success in a postsecondary environment?

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<sup>13</sup> Navigation to the dashboard from the District Webpage: The School District of Palm Beach County - > About Us - > Reports and Publications - > Tests/Survey Reports - > District Outcomes -> College Matriculation

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